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resses to the south Damascus. The most striking event of the year, was the march of Seoud himself, at the head of forty-five thousand men, against Bagdad; but he was defeated in several skirmishes, and compelled to retire.

In 1809, Seoud attempted nothing of consequence: but the war between the Wahabites on the coast of the Persian Gulf, and the inhabitants of Mascat assisted by the English, exhibits an event of no small importance. Lieutenant Colonel Smith, in a small squadron of frigates under the command of Captain Mainwright, landed at Ras al Kraim, or al Khyma, the principal rendezvous of the pirates, and burned and destroyed the town, with all the vessels in the harbour, amounting so upwards of fifty, more than half of which, were very large dows, and a large quantity of naval stores. They then proceeded to the port of Linga, where they burned nine large dows; and afterwards to Luft, which surrendered after some resistance. Here three very large dows were destroyed, beside other vessels. Thus a naval power was annihilated; which, had there been no maritime force but that of the natives of Asia to oppose it, would soon have rendered the Wahabites the sovereigns of all the seas in that part of the globe.

It is difficult, perhaps, to conjecture what effects may ultimately be wrought by a power, that has grown up in so rapid and extraordinary a manner. The loss of Arabia, and perhaps of Syria, and the country bordering on the Euphrates, may prove a mortal blow to the Ottoman empire, threatened by so many enemies from without, and divided by the quarrels of so many independent chiefs within. The abolition too, or at least the reform of Mohammedanism in the spot that gave it birth, must have some influence on the condition of Christians

in those countries; and the relations between the Oriental and Occidental nations, can scarcely fail to experience some change. Neither can the suppression of the pilgrimages to Mecca, a remarkable custom that has prevailed for twelve centuries, and formed a bond of commercial and religious union between the extremities of Asia and Africa, be an event of trifling import in modern history. A reform in the religion of Mohammed, however, was to be expected. All who have resided any time among the Arabs, must have remarked their proneness to dispense with religious ceremonies. This fact was particularly evident in Egypt: in an Arabian camp none of the religious practices observed by the inhabitants of cities were to be seen, the people excusing themselves by the want of temples, and their wandering life.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

THE following letter was written by the late Bishop of Derry, to a respectable Dissenting Clergyman, resident in his neighbourhood, at a time when the Catholic claims first became subject of general discussion. It is now sent to you, in the hope that the general interest excited by that important question, will induce you to think it deserving of a place in your publication. You may rely on its authenticity. I am yours, &c.

ANON.

Rome, July the 3d, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your letter of the 3d May with much pleasure, and read it with great satisfaction: the receipt of it testified you had not forgot me, and the contents proved that you did not deserve that I should forget you; since you are still the same candid, liberal, and free-spirited man

that I used to visit with so much satisfaction at Burt. You are in the right, my friend, to call me home at this juncture; and I shall return with the greater pleasure, since Ireland is no longer what I left it, the land of narrow prejudices, persecution, and intolerance; but of liberty, candour, and indulgence; and since Parliament has learnt to practice that mildest of all christian doctrines—of doing to others, as we wish they should do unto us.

In my former travels, I used to pursue with some zeal the objects you so warmly recommended; “of surveying the fine territories, the cultivated countries, the soil, climate, and different productions of various countries,” but a Christian Bishop, and especially a Protestant, my friend, ought to have greater objects in view, and nobler game to pursue.

“Paulo majora canemus: non omnes
Arbusta juvant, humiles que myricæ.”

Agriculture, and all its subordinate branches of improvement, deserve the attention of every traveller, and whoever has the welfare of his country at heart, will endeavour to import some new lessons in this science; but it is liberty, and above all religious liberty, that can make a country flourish, give it numerous inhabitants, and make those inhabitants peaceable, industrious and happy: without this, my friend, without the liberty of worshipping our Creator according to the dictates of our conscience, no matter whether ill or well directed, civil liberty is but imperfect, and allows us only the use of our body, without that of the mind. I can conceive only one case in which *religious liberty* ought not to be granted to one part of a society; and that is, when it proves inconsistent with the civil liberty of the remainder: and this has generally been supposed to be

the case with the Roman Catholics; but this supposition has been founded entirely upon a mistake, and upon the idea, that every Roman Catholic was a *Papist*.—Whereas this is so far from being the case, that one might as well suppose every Protestant was an Episcopalian, and every Episcopalian an high Churchman, which you know would be a gross error.

In *Popery*, as in every other sect, there are subdivisions; there are also fundamental points in which all the members of that sect agree, and there are secondary ones, in which all differ: these are no longer dogmas, not the trunk or body of the tree which it would be sacrilege to touch, but merely branches, twigs, and sometimes excrescences which a wise gardener generally prunes, in order to strengthen the tree, and improve the fruit, but which our *Popish gardener* has suffered to multiply and extend, in order to make as many stand under its shade as possible.—Transubstantiation, seven sacraments, &c. &c. these are the dogmas of Popery, the harmless articles of faith which every Papist is bound to believe, and which every Protestant may allow them to preach, without fearing for the *Habeas Corpus* and the *trial by jury*.—But the school opinions are more dangerous and more important: they are like a Frenchman's ruffles, of more consequence than his shirt, and generally more ostensible—these school opinions are the sting of Popery, and make so venomous an animal, that whoever has the misfortune to be bit by him, runs the chance of losing some good limb of his liberty. The Test Act, which was passed in Ireland in 1774, was calculated to distinguish the Papist from the Catholic, and the partizan of the court of Rome, from the member of the Church of Rome; and it has done it

so effectually, that one half of that communion have taken the oath, whilst the other half, with the best disposition in the world to follow their example, found the pill too large for their swallow, and for fear of being choaked in the attempt, were obliged to desist, swear it was poison, and that all those would be *kilt* who had taken it. In fact, the court of Rome have denounced vengeance against all those who have subscribed the test, and they are for ever erased out of the book of promotion. These are the men therefore who ought to be tolerated in the free, comfortable exercise of their religion, nay, they have an irreversible right to it, and the withholding that right is as gross persecution, as any committed by the court of Rome: for whenever the *religious opinions* of any sect do not affect the *civil liberties* of the community, intolerance becomes persecution;—and a Protestant legislature who does not tolerate such opinions, is a Protestant upon Popish principles; he denies to others that private judgment which he exercises himself, and by the use of which alone, his ancestors separated from the most *universal church* ever known in the world.

These, my friend, are my principles, and I am sorry to find that those of your brethren differ from them, or that their conduct differs from their principles. Protestant Dissenters, if they would be consistent, should allow of *Popish Dissenters*; and above all when they refuse to do so, they ought to be certain that their refusal is well grounded, and that the sectarists whom they persecute, do really hold the principles they condemn. A Protestant dare not avow, that he persecutes mere speculative opinions, and therefore if the true Catholic, if the Catholic who subscribes the Test Act, holds none but speculative opinions, he cannot properly be per-

secuted in any instance whatever, by a consistent Protestant. Your parliament, therefore, your newly enlightened Senate, who upon the 5th of June, 1778, have allowed themselves to think of relieving *innocent Catholics* in temporal matters, but have declined to indulge them in spiritual, though much less important to the state, have given a problem to the world, of which no one will find the solution, who does not know as much of this *conjuring trick* as I do.

The case then is no more than this. In 1774, the Parliament passed an act, called the Test; enabling the Papists to purge themselves by oath of certain dangerous and horrid opinions, imputed to them, which uninformed Protestants considered as the essence of Popery, and which the Papists themselves asserted to be mere school opinions. As soon as the act was published, the Popish gentlemen, who scarce knew that such opinions existed, except by the imputations of the Protestants, were surprised to find themselves called on to renounce doctrines they never held, and rarely had heard of, and flocked in crouds to do themselves justice by the most solemn abjuration. The clergy, whose mental food are school opinions, which nourish little, and bloat much, were immediately divided, part subscribed the test, the rest refused it. The refusers complained to Rome of the subscribers, the subscribers were proscribed in the black-book here, and your senate have been unwise enough not to inscribe them in the white-book at home. They have renounced all the doctrines which rendered them dangerous, and have received none of the privileges that would make them comfortable, but in the exercise of their religion, are confounded with the recusants and non-subscribers...“*Fletum teneatis Amici.*”—Yours ever affectionately,
FR DERRY.